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CLAIMS

1-3 (Canceled)

4. (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 1 further comprising A method for implementing protection switching for a virtual private network comprising:~~
~~establishing a working virtual private network path and a protection virtual private network path between a first edge node and a second edge node;~~
~~switching traffic from the working virtual private network path to the protection virtual private network path when detected traffic congestion in the working virtual private network path exceeds a predetermined threshold;~~
establishing a management channel in at least one of said working virtual private network paths;
connecting said management channel between said first edge node and said second edge node;
transmitting time stamps across said management channel;
transmitting network measurement parameters across said management channel; and
analyzing said time stamps and said network management parameters to detect failures or congestion in said working virtual private network path.

5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 4, wherein said time stamps and said network management parameters are analyzed by an algorithm in said first edge node.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 4, wherein said time stamps and said network management parameters are analyzed by an algorithm in said second edge node.